



COLORADO
Department of Public
Health & Environment

May 8, 2020

Cory Wall, Chairman
David L. Hornung
Gary Koop
Dawn James, Public Health Director and Health Officer
PO Box 160
Burlington, CO 80807-0160

RE: Application for Variance from Public Health Order 20-28 Safer at Home

Dear County Commissioners:

Thank you for your recent application for a variance from Public Health Order (PHO) 20-28 Safer at Home to the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). Our reviewers have some concerns about your proposal and request further information before we are able to provide a variance.

As stated in Appendix G to PHO 20-28, when reviewing a variance request, consideration is given to the current prevalence of COVID-19 in the jurisdiction, including whether cases are increasing, stable, or decreasing. Given that on May 6th a mass testing event took place as part of the ID Now rapid screening pilot, CDPHE is requesting the results of this event to ensure that adequate testing exists before a decision can be made regarding your request.

When Kit Carson resubmits its variance application with the results of the May 6th testing event, we further advise you to consider the following in your application:

- Phase 2 is dependent on less than 15% tested individuals being positive, which may be too high. Currently, the prevalence in the State is at 10% positivity.
- Phase 3 is dependent on less than 10% tested individuals being positive before having unrestricted movement, this is too high. A 5% positivity rate would be more appropriate.
- An absolute number of weekly cases should be used as a threshold, related to public health's capacity to do a full case investigation, contact tracing, and outbreak response
- The materials you submitted with your application contain information beyond those items identified in the application for which you seek a variance. Please note in the application all specific requirements from which you seek a waiver, and identify where the proposed alternative restrictions are found in the submitted materials.
- For restaurants, gyms, and large venues there should be a cap on the number of individuals present in addition to 6 foot distance spacing requirements as well as percentage of fire code capacity.

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- Face coverings should be required for all public accommodations settings.
- Employees and customers should be screened for symptoms and excluded if symptomatic.
- Ensure that there are adequate protections throughout the lifespan of the Suppression Plan to protect vulnerable individuals. This includes nursing facility residents, as we have significant concerns with allowing visitation in nursing facilities with a 10% or higher positivity rate.

We appreciate the work that you are doing in these difficult times to prevent further spread of disease, and we are here to provide technical assistance if you need it. We look forward to working with you as a valued partner in public health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jill Hunsaker Ryan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jill Hunsaker Ryan, MPH
Executive Director